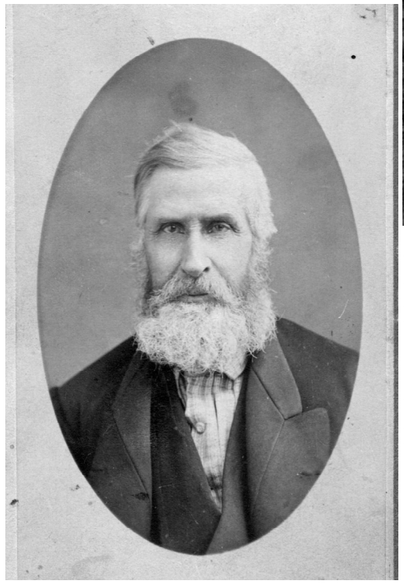
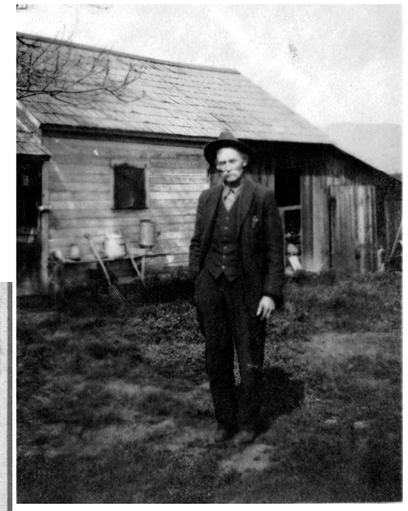
JOHN HOLTON (1817-1903)

Holton Road was named for John and Hannah Holton. The Holtons were deep into spiritualism and were friends of John Beeson. Many séances were conducted under their roof to enlighten and comfort Wagner Creek residents.





vice she performed against another tribe. Coleman Creek is named for Matthew and John Coleman.

WILLIAM KERBY (1869-1930)
EMMA KERBY (1873-1947)

The Kerby Family lived on Yank Gulch. The name Yank is shortened from Yankee, but it is not known if it was named after anyone specific.

Clockwise from top middle Hendrick Goddard, the Kerby family, the Coleman family, John Holton

HENDRICK GODDARD (1858-1938)

Goddard was from a long line of carpenters. His father, Blin C. Goddard (1822-1893) had a hand in building many of the homes in the Wagner Creek area. Several of the Goddard family rest in the Stearns Cemetery.

MATTHEW HUBBARD COLEMAN (1826-1908)
SABRA (GODDARD) COLEMAN (1847-1923)

Matthew and his brother, John, were among the few who purchased their land from a Native American. Ironically, the woman they purchased from was a Florida native who had gotten the land from the government for ser-

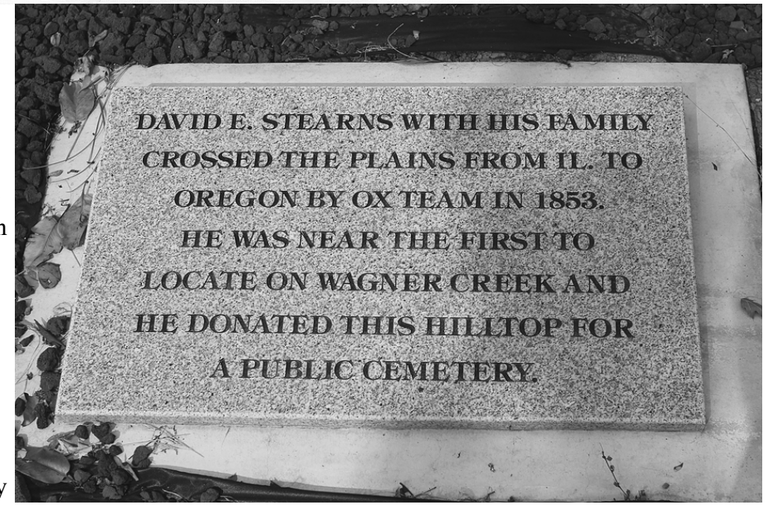
Images courtesy Images of America by Jan Wright (Arcadia, 2009). Thanks to the Talent Historical Society, especially Belinda Vos for her work on this guide, to the Oregon Historic Cemeteries Commission for 2016 funding to create this guide, and to SOHS for use of the design template. Produced at Southern Oregon University.

OREGON STATE PARKS

Nature HISTORY Discovery

Stearns CEMETERY

The Stearns Cemetery is located west of Talent, Oregon and can be found by following Wagner Creek Road to Anderson Creek Road, then turning onto Anderson Creek Road for .15 mile. The cemetery is on the left, just past Allen Lane. Sitting atop a tree-covered knoll, the picturesque cemetery looks out over the Wagner Creek Valley.

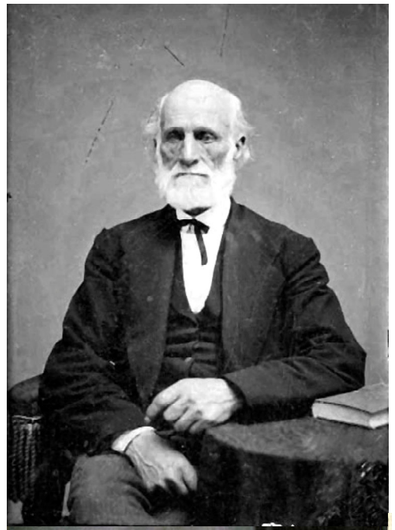

DAVID E. STEARNS WITH HIS FAMILY
CROSSED THE PLAINS FROM IL. TO
OREGON BY OX TEAM IN 1853.
HE WAS NEAR THE FIRST TO
LOCATE ON WAGNER CREEK AND
HE DONATED THIS HILLTOP FOR
A PUBLIC CEMETERY.

The cemetery was created in 1857 when Judge Avery P. Stearns was buried in his nephew, David Stearns, wheat field, and in the following years, the Stearns family allowed burials there as a courtesy to their neighbors. In 1886, following David Stearns' death, the family donated the land for a public cemetery. Then in August of 1889, local school master W.J. Dean, along with Welborn Beeson and trustees John Abbott and Ern Purves, laid out the Stearns Cemetery on the hillside west of Talent. A granite memorial stone honors the Stearns family and their donation.

Volunteers and families provide upkeep as Stearns is not a perpetual care cemetery. It's operated by the non-profit Wagner Creek Cemetery Association. In 2011, the cemetery was officially proclaimed an historic cemetery. The three-acre cemetery includes the original Stearns area at the top of the hill as well as the former Independent Order of Odd Fellows Cemetery located at the bottom of the hill next to the road. The cemetery was deeded to the association in 1980.

Many of Talent's well known pioneer families are buried in the Stearns Cemetery. More information about these individuals can be found at the Talent Historical Society, which operates a museum and research library at 105 N. Market Street in Talent. Stop by the Talent Historical Society or contact the Society at: info @ talenthistory.org or visit their website at www.talenthistory.org.

Stearns Cemetery
Anderson Creek Road
Talent, Oregon



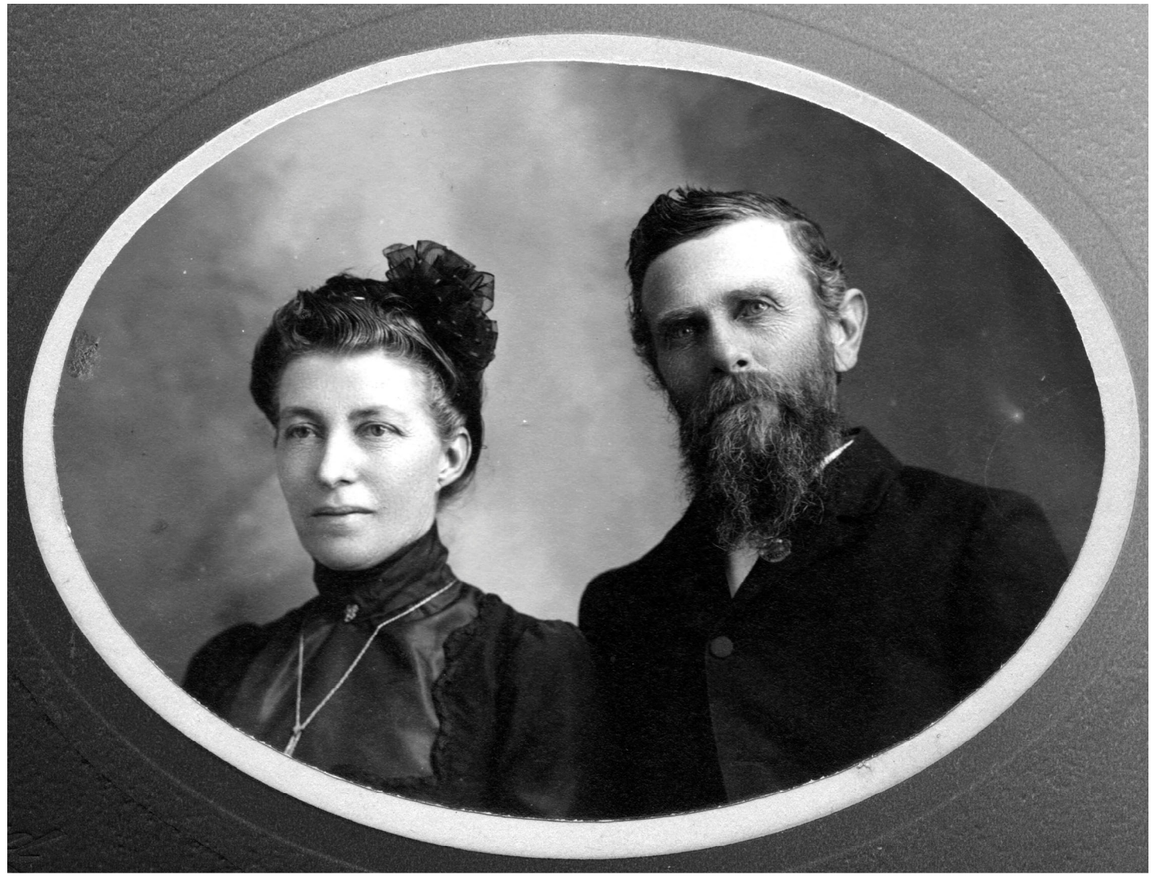
Clockwise from top left: John Beeson, Welborn and Mary Catherine Beeson wedding photo, Ann Welborn Beeson

JOHN BEESON (1803-1889)

Characterized as a man ahead of his time, abolitionist John Beeson came from Illinois to Oregon in 1853. When he moved to the west, his focus changed from slavery to the rights of Native Americans. As a result of his outspokenness, he was pressured to leave his family and the valley in 1856. He went back east and published *A Plea for the Indians* in 1857 and for the rest of his life advocated for civil rights for the Native Americans, speaking to churches, politicians, presidents, and Indian agents. John Beeson's grave marker reads: A Pioneer and Man of Peace.

ANN WELBORN BEESON (1805-1866)

The wife of John Beeson and the mother of Welborn, Ann had to struggle through pioneer times without her husband's help. In fact, he often asked his family for money for his east coast mission to advance the cause of Native Americans. Born in England, Ann married John Beeson in 1827 and came to America with him in 1830.



Ursula and Willis Dean

WELBORN BEESON (1836-1893)

Welborn Beeson was a teenager when he arrived with his parents in Southern Oregon in 1853. His 1851-1893 diaries left a powerful historical record of the cultural, social, political, and personal events that touched Southern Oregonians' lives. His honest and detailed accounts distinguish his writing from others.

MARY CATHERINE (KATE) BEESON (1849-1894)

Welborn and Kate Beeson were married on August 6, 1866 a short time after his mother's death and a whirlwind courtship. Kate was 17, the daughter of Colonel John Brophy. Her Catholic faith initially presented issues for the couple, but they overcame them and went on to have eight children.

URSULA DEAN (1856-1954)
WILLIS J. DEAN (1843-1921)

The Deans were outspoken members of the community. Both supported free-thinking and women's rights. Willis came here seeking a position as a schoolteacher. Ursula was a pretty widow with two children when they married.

JASPER FORCE (1800-1907)

Although less known than others buried at the cemetery, Jasper represents the miners and laborers who did seasonal work for area families and had no permanent houses. They were an important part of the community and had a great deal of value even into their later years. Jasper lived to the ripe old age of 107. His grave marker is on the smaller size and off to the side, but he was well known in the community. Jasper spent his last years on Emmett Beeson's property where he "chopped wood, feeds stock and does everything that comes up to be done" according to an *Ashland Tidings* article written in March 1906, Beeson built him a small house on his farm. The article says of Jasper that, "He had never owned a foot of ground in his life, and his time has passed as a laborer working for a day's pay. He is contented and cheerful and does not mourn his lack of accumulations, having gone always on the theory that sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."